

Message Text

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65

ACTION EUR-12

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DEFENSE FOR OASD/ISA AND OASA/PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MCAP, MOPS, NATO, UK

SUBJECT: THE TIMES LONDON, ARTICLE ON "SURPRISE
ATTACK" PUBLISHED 15 MARCH 1975

1. TWO LENGTHY ARTICLES CONCERNING NATO STRATEGY
APPEARED TODAY IN THE TIMES UNDER BANNER HEADLINES. ON
THE FRONT PAGE UNDER HEADLINE, "SURPRISE ATTACK COULD
MAKE NUCLEAR WEAPONS USELESS", A "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT"
REPORTS THAT "DEFENSE OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON ARE EXPRES-
SING CONCERN AT CONCLUSIONS OF A NATO STUDY ON THE
FEASIBILITY OF A SURPRISE ATTACK ON WESTERN EUROPE."
THE THRUST OF THE ARTICLE IS THAT WARSAW PACT FORCES
COULD BE ACROSS THE RHINE "WITHIN 48 HOURS, MAKING
NONSENSE OF THE WEST'S 'FORWARD STRATEGY'". INSIDE ON
PAGE 12 UNDER THE HEADLINE, "THE WEST MUST ACT TO DE-
FEND ITSELF WHILE IT STILL HAS THE CHANCE", LORD
CHALFONT (ALAN GWYNNE JONES, A FORMER MINISTER OF STATE,
FCO 1964-70) WRITES AT LENGTH ON HOW THE GAPS IN NATO
DEFENSES "MAY TEMPT THE SOVIET UNION INTO A SURPRISE
ATTACK."

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2. WE QUERIED SOME MOD SOURCES CONCERNING THE ARTICLES, AND THEY EXPRESSED PERPLEXITY AND IGNORANCE ABOUT THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE SO-CALLED NATO REPORT AS WELL AS IDENTIFICATION OF THE "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT". A MOD SOURCE SAID HE THOUGHT "THE BOOK STEINHOFF IS WRITING" COULD BE "THE REPORT" AND ANOTHER, NOT WITHOUT A TOUCH OF JOCOSITY, SAID THAT "CHALFONT COULD HAVE WRITTEN BOTH ARTICLES" PURPOSEFULLY JUXTAPOSING THEM. ANOTHER POINT MADE--PUT IN THE FORM OF A RHETORICAL QUESTION--WAS TO ASK WHETHER WASHINGTON MIGHT BE THE MOST LIKELY SOURCE SINCE "OUR INQUIRIES WITH OUR BRUSSELS PEOPLE HAVE DRAWN A BLANK."

3. IN RESPONSE TO ANY PRESS QUERIES HERE' WE ARE SAYING WE HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF THIS REPORT. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION YOU CAN PROVIDE TOGETHER WITH GUIDANCE FOR OUR USE.

ARMSTRONG

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